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A

PASTORAL LETTER,

ON THE

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION OF THE SLAVES

OF

MEMBERS OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN

THE STATE OF SOUTH-CAROLINA,

PREPARED

AT THE REQUEST OF THE CONVENTION

OF THE

CHURCHES OF THE DIOCESE.

TO WHICH IS APPENDED

A TABLE OF SCRIPTURE LESSONS, PREPARED IN CONFORMITY WITH THE RESOLUTION OF THE CONVENTION.

By NATHANIEL BOWEN, D. D.
Bishop of the Pro. Epis. Church in South-Carolina.

CHARLESTON:
PRINTED BY A. E. MILLER,
No. 4 Broad-street,

1835.

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNALS OF THE CONVENTION OF THE
PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN SOUTH-CAROLINA, HELD
IN FEBRUARY, 1834, AND FEBRUARY, 1835.

Journal of 1834, page 37—"On motion of the Rev. Mr. Young, *Resolved*, That a Committee of three Clerical, and three Lay Delegates of this Convention, be appointed to take into consideration the subject of the religious instruction of our slave population, and to report to the next annual Convention of the Church of the Diocese."

"The following Committee were appointed, viz: the Rev. Thos. John Young, the Rev. C. E. Gadsden, D. D. the Rev. P. Trapier, Mr. Stephen Ellhott, Jr., James H. Ladson, Esq. and the Hon. Lieut. Governor, C. C. Pinckney, Esq."

Journal of 1835, page 39—"The Rev. Mr. Young, from the Committee on the instruction of the coloured population, made a report at length."

"After discussion, on motion of Mr. Robt. Barnwell, the report was accepted."

"The resolutions contained in the report, were then considered, and after some modification, were adopted as follows," viz:

1. "*Resolved*, That the Bishop be respectfully requested to address a Pastoral Letter on the subject, (embracing so much of the report, as he shall deem expedient) to the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese."

2. "*Resolved*, That the Bishop be respectfully requested to prepare, or cause to be prepared, a Catechism and Scripture Lessons, for the use of the teachers (Clerical or Lay) of our coloured population."

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TO THE
CLERGY AND LAITY

OF THE
PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

BRETHREN—

THE reluctance with which, in compliance with the desire of the Convention, as shown by the extracts given from the Journal of their proceedings, I should otherwise have proceeded to address you on the subject of “the religious instruction of our slave population,” has been obviated in no considerable degree, by the sense with which I am myself deeply affected, of its claims too long generally disregarded, and the strong sympathy, in the feeling with which I am myself possessed respecting it, of many of the most wise and judicious, and at the same time, extensively interested, of the proprietors, embraced by the limits of our communion. There is, however, another, and more obvious reason, why any such reluctance, on my part, might be waived. Acting, on this occasion, as the mere organ of the Convention, and having nothing to do, but to report to you *their* views, I cannot but feel the responsibility of my agency to be very light, and that it belongs to others, rather than myself, to vindicate and make good with their brethren, generally, almost every thing which this communication will be found to convey. The subject, however, as they have presented it, will, I flatter myself, meet with no other, than at least a friendly reception.

The sentiment which the Committee of the Convention, in the beginning of their report on this subject, have ex-

pressed, is strongly entertained by many, and will have its correctness disputed by none. "To Episcopalians of South Carolina, say they, the subject of the religious instruction of our slave population, is one of deep and vital interest. Forming as we do, a large majority of the slave-holders in the low country, we, more than other denominations of Christians, are bound to inquire into the duty and means of affording such instruction to our slaves, as shall make them wise unto salvation." "Among us, must begin the good work, which, if entered upon with an humble reliance upon divine grace, must result in a harvest of abundant blessing to the Church and her members, both now and at that day, when we shall be called upon to give an account of our stewardship."

With respect to the duty of the religious instruction of our slave population, I do not allow myself to question the existence among Christian people, of a common persuasion of its imperative obligation, to the whole extent of its practicability. "Slaves" (says one of our most respectable and exemplary proprietors,) "are human beings; like the rest of our fellow creatures they must die, and render to God an account of their actions." "No Christian will deny the importance of religious instruction to slaves. On this head, there is no difference of opinion."* "If I know my own heart, and understand my own motives," (says another distinguished planter, an influential member of the House of Representatives, in the Legislature of the State, and to whom, in the last capacity, the public are indebted for an important instrumentality in procuring the enactment of some provisions of law most happily adapted to the moral amelioration of our slaves,) "so far from obstructing the development of moral and religious feelings in the slave by any measure, I would the rather lend my aid towards its encouragement; and as I have already declared, would glad-

* Essay on the Management of Slaves, &c. by Whitemarsh B. Seabrook, pp. 14, 15.

ly appropriate the title of my income to the attainment of an object in every point of view so eminently desirable.”*

The *importance* and *desireableness* of the religious instruction of slaves, must be understood to involve its religious obligation. The writers whom I have quoted have meant, I have reason to believe, to assert nothing less. They have but expressed that which is, of course, the common sentiment of Christian people. The argument of which the mind of the Christian is in possession, whether resting on the letter of Scripture precept, or drawn from the principles of Christianity, is complete to demonstrate the indispensable duty of the father and master, in every instance, to have his household, of whomsoever it may consist, to the utmost that he can, kept, in the fear and knowledge of the Lord; and he who will make no use, to such an effect, of the authority with which Providence has invested him, or will neither by instruction or example, endeavour that his household shall learn, and be faithful to religious obligation, and be set in the way of their immortal interest, as the believer of the Gospel cannot but conceive it, is certainly unmindful of that which his own religious consistency, soundness, and safety should be understood to imply.

To him, who is not, *through the faith and profession of the Gospel*, yet prepared to admit the demands of religion on the subject, considerations of humanity may be addressed, to which he needs not be supposed to be insensible. It is, often, not without good reason asserted, that, in general the condition of the slave among us, in comparison with the aboriginal condition from which he was taken, as well as that of the labouring poor of most nations of the earth, although not slaves, is enviably good. Both in a temporal and moral point of view, this superiority of his condition must, I believe, be admitted. Its circumstances are those of great *comparative* elevation. Many of the arts of civilization, and

* Letter to the Hon. Whitmarsh B. Seabrook, Esq. by Edward R. Laurens, p. 9.

the means of comfort are known to him, and are generally within the reach of his attainment : while by virtue of the discipline and control to which the innate evil of his nature is forcibly subjected, as well as by the gradual influence of the kindness and good treatment to which not even he can be insensible, he becomes, to a considerable extent, a humanized and ameliorated being. Still, while he is denied the knowledge of God according to the Scriptures, and as involved in it, those consolations and hopes of religion, without which, happiness cannot be known in any circumstances of human existence, his condition remains, whatever may be its comparative advantages, one which it is melancholy and painful to contemplate. If it is temporally better, it is spiritually worse than that even of the savage freedom from which he has been rescued. In that state he had not been hopeless as to Christian illumination. For him, as for all the human race, the command had been given, and must in his good time who gave it, have been executed, "to preach the Gospel to every creature." In its progress through the nations, *the sound which is gone out into all the world*, must have come to his ears. Even into the deep darkness of the shadow of death, which had enwrapt him, "the light which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world," must have one day shone. Deny your slaves the privilege of access to the means of Christian knowledge, and you characterize their condition, by a moral hopelessness, to which not even the roamer of the wilderness, and the tenant of the forest, are consigned.

One other view of the case may be presented. *In what degree* moral obligation exists for your slaves you know not, or how it may be qualified. Yet they are placed where responsibility is imposed, and where the violation of it has its immediate penal consequences. Offences against the moral law, their ignorance does not excuse, and you annex present penalties to the crimes of which they are guilty, at once against it and your authority. Shall they have no

knowledge of higher and more solemn sanctions to restrain them from evil, than those which your will has instituted, no motive but the fear of their enforcement, to influence them, and yet be expected to be in all things faithful, upright, and pure? You refer them not to God, and they *are without him in the world*. Providence has subjected them to your control and authority, and they undoubtedly are bound to obey the one, and be subjected to the other. Yet shall they know no reason for either, but that of the vanity or the bitter present effects to them, of resistance? Will you deprive the temptation to resistance of none of its natural strength? That temptation, perhaps, incites them to the crime, of which the last and bitterest penalty of the law, is the consequence. Shall humanity not plead for them, that they may be saved from the power of this temptation? Shall they not have the terrors of the Lord in aid of those of men, to restrain them from their ruin? And more—shall not humanity be permitted to plead for them, that they may have the benign and cheering influence of Christian instruction, to reconcile them to their lot of necessary, inevitable, and not intolerable restraint—to infuse the happiness of “subjection, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake,” and to illumine the otherwise gloomy scenes of their earthly toil and duty, with the hope of the reward in Heaven, that awaits alike the fidelity of the servant, as of the master, at the hands of him who has assigned to every one his lot and portion upon earth?

Passing, thus, by that part of the subject, which would consist of reasons of religious obligation given, for the Christian instruction of our slaves, I would almost as transiently treat the question of its policy. Experience has placed this beyond the possibility of reasonable dispute. The report of the Committee, contains statements on this point, whose authenticity and correctness are perfectly unquestionable. “As early (say they) as the year 1702, the venerable Society (in England) for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, sent out their first Missionary to

this State, with particular directions for instructing the slave population of the country." "From that period, the work has been carried on, with varied success."

"An appeal to facts will confirm the assertion, that whenever the Gospel is preached in all its purity to these people, and religious instruction afforded, immense good has resulted, both to the master and the slave. The effects produced by the labours of the Missionaries and Catechists of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, has been already stated. In the West-India Islands, the exertions of the Moravian Missionaries, have been crowned with eminent success. In the Island of St. Thomas—in that of Jamaica, Barbados and St. Kitts, they had the satisfaction to find such effects follow their labours, as convinced the Planter's of their advantage, and induced warm expressions from them, of gratitude, confidence and esteem."

"In our own country also, facts prove the beneficial results of proper religious instruction. In the insurrection of 1712, in New-York, only two of the scholars of the Catechist of the Episcopal Church, were even accused of being engaged. One of them was proved innocent, and the other (not a baptized person,) was not engaged in the murder committed. At the time of the contemplated insurrection in Charleston in 1832, there were 316 coloured persons, communicants in our Episcopal Churches in that city, and a large, not ascertained number of worshippers not communicants, not one of whom was implicated; and indeed the discovery of the plot is to be attributed to the just sense of duty entertained by individuals of that class, who were Episcopalians. The experience of your Committee, warrant them to assert, that the best ordered, and most prosperous plantations, are those where true religion flourishes among the slaves. On the plantation of Mr. Clay, of Georgia,* a member of the Pres-

* Mr. Clay's Pamphlet is worthy of general attention. If his plan may not be thought to be generally admissible or practicable, it will at least shew that success in this important matter is attainable.—N. B.

byterian Church, (whose admirable 'details of a plan for the moral improvement of negroes on plantations,' ought to be read by every planter, and, who with a truly Christian zeal and fidelity, has devoted himself to the moral and religious improvement of his slaves,) the orderly behaviour and happy condition of his people, are such as to cheer the heart of the philanthropist, and put to silence the cavils of the Northern fanatic and abolitionist. "If every body of negroes in the Southern States, (said an advocate of the Colonization Society to Mr. Clay, after looking through the arrangement of his plantation) was disciplined and instructed as yours are, so far from wishing to colonize your slaves in Africa, I should be glad to bring all the Africans to you." They do more, and better work, with greater cheerfulness, and in less time, than before he introduced religious instruction among them.* His factor's returns show that his income has rather increased than diminished. On the plantation of the Rev. Mr. Blodget, also of the Presbyterian Church in St. Luke's Parish, the slaves are assembled regularly to family prayers, morning and evening, and the result has been, that, that plantation is one of the best conducted, and most productive in proportion to the number of hands employed, of any in that Parish. The labours of the Methodist Missionaries in St. Helena Parish, St. Luke's Parish, St. Bartholomew's Parish, and on the Santee Rivers, have been attended with such good effects, as to gain them the confidence of the planters concerned."

"We might multiply instances, and state individual cases without number, but sufficient has been said to prove, that even were the *duty* not imperative, it would be sound *policy* in the planter to use every exertion—to employ every lawful means, to furnish his slaves with proper religious instruction."

† In a letter from one of the members of his family, it is said—"We have great reason to feel that the blessing of God attends these efforts—our people are every year more contented, cheerful, and industrious. There is a decided improvement in the morals of the women and the men, so far as we can judge."

The evidence thus given of the effect of religious instruction, in the restraint put by it upon the worst passions of our nature, in its effect so to humanize, and soften and change, that temperament in the slave, which would have instigated him to deeds of the foulest crime, is evidence of its moral influence in the whole extent, in which it makes men "wise unto salvation." It bespeaks "*the fruits of the spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long suffering, patience, gentleness, meekness and brotherly kindness.*" It shows unequivocally the effect of the inhibition, received by faith into the heart; "*Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, be put away from you, with all malice*"—and of that important apostolic instruction—"servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; with good will, doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free."

It is when effects and influences such as these are manifest, that we are authorized to pronounce with confidence on the utility and success of the religious instruction of the slave population of the country—and, of course, to assert that religious duty and policy, here go hand in hand. I am by no means disposed hastily to attach importance to the reports which are sometimes made to the religious public, by various denominations, of the numbers of people of colour, who attend religious ordinances—the crowds of them gathering at appointed places of religious resort, and joining their voices in loud and clamorous devotions. The proper inquiry is, what effect has the hearing of the word, and the instruction that is given him, upon the temper and the life of the negro. 'Is he a better man in the condition in which Providence has placed him? Is he more honest, more temperate, more faithful, more quiet and contented? Is he better in his domestic relations? Is he more kind and just, and friendly in his deportment towards his fellow slaves? Is he more sensible of the obligation of gratitude and obedience towards his master? Do his whole life

and conversation, evince that he is "*transformed by the renewing of his mind?*" Is he by the constraint of divine precept, as conveyed to him by the mouth of his religious instructors, from the word of God, so far as may be reasonably expected of him, in all things, happily and cheerfully conformed to the necessity of his condition, and through the steady, diligent, faithful, peaceful, performance of all its duties, seeking, as the disciple and servant of Christ, to "*work out his eternal salvation?*"

"We are aware" (say the Committee,) "that it has been a common complaint among planters, that those of their slaves, who professed to be followers of Christ, were generally the most negligent of their duty, and the most difficult to manage. But the religion of Jesus, *cannot produce this result.* It has proceeded *from a want of true religion.* The master leaves his slave to procure instruction where he can, most frequently from those as ignorant as himself, and then complains, that religion produces what is the fruit of its abuse. There are hypocrites and superstitious persons among all classes of society. But let the master exert himself to give or obtain for his slaves *proper* religious instruction, and he will find the followers of the Cross of Christ, the most industrious, honest, submissive, and well ordered of his charge."

The facts already adduced,* to shew the happy practical efficacy of the religious instruction of our slaves, speak intelligibly, and with demonstration for themselves. In many other instances the same result admits of being satisfactorily shewn. From a voluminous report of a Committee of the British House of Commons, ordered to be published in 1832, I might adduce much convincing evidence of the happiest efficacy of the religious instruction of negro slaves; *evidence irresistible*, to shew that these people duly trained in the

*The facts stated on page 8, in relation to Moravian Missionaries in the British West Indies, are taken from a History of Moravian Missions, by Rev. J. Holmes, from which the information relative to the other Islands, has been derived. * A note of the Committee to this effect, was omitted to be inserted in its proper place.

school of Christ, have been made to a great extent, and through very numerous plantations, his disciples not *in name only and in tongue, but in deed and in truth*. If less of the influence of religious privilege, than was to be looked for, has been reported to us from those possessions, since the extraordinary measures of the British Government in relation to them have been carried into effect, it is admissible to ask, if this be not the natural effect of a, perhaps, premature and too sudden investment of the slaves, with a degree of freedom for which they were not adequately prepared. Even, however, under the trying circumstances, into which these unfortunate people have been thrown, by a legislation, which dealing what was thought to be good to one class of subjects, has too slightly, perhaps, estimated the claims of others, we are warranted in asserting that the effect of religious instruction among them, has been most happily restraining and conservative. It were, however, but unnecessarily to lengthen this communication, to quote from the mass of documents, of which the report referred to consists, while observation and experience, supply us with a testimony at once direct and sufficient, in the indisputable fact of a religious and moral character, of a peculiar value, transmitted from the earliest subjects of religious instruction here, by the Missionaries of the venerable Society of which the Committee have spoken, and the certain existence of a similar character now prevailing, where similar means have been perseveringly employed to produce it. We may appeal, moreover, to any candid and reasonable inquirer into the merits of the question, whether the religious instruction of these people, be, according to his own observation, an abortive benevolence or not—and whether, as much at least, as circumstances would warrant to be looked for, has not been, and is not, and may not be expected to be, its result. *To whom much is given, of him much will be required.* Take the question with a reference to the means and opportunity enjoyed, and the demand rea-

sonably founded in them of improvement, and say whether the comparison is indisputably much to the advantage of the most favoured of those who collectively compose the community, in which we live. Inconsistency with profession, and abuse or neglect of privilege, the too little moral influence of religion, its principles, offices and observances upon life and conduct, are to be admitted and deplored, among all alike, who profess and call themselves Christians—certainly not in a greater proportion, when the circumstances of their case are fairly considered, among those, whose claim to be instructed is under consideration, than among others. On this subject, I may be permitted to adduce the testimony of one, who though dead, is well entitled, from his long and extensive experience of it, to be heard: I mean the late venerable Minister of the Baptist Church in this city. It is matter of painful regret, that I have not his written words, in which to convey the effect of his experience on his mind. It is, however, perfectly recollected, that when, some few years, before his death, he had expressed to me his concern for the existence of a prejudice against the religious instruction of our slave population, in the minds of respectable fellow-citizens, as seeming to find its justification in unhappy facts which had brought to light the crimes of some professing Christian people, long successfully concealed from Ministers and masters by the plausible guise of religion, he declared it (the delusion of fanaticism among these people admitted, for which others were more in fault than they, and the treachery and deceit natural to the slave, allowed for) to be the result of the long experience and observation of his Ministry, that the practical influence of Christian profession and communion, was not by any means less, among them, than among those with whom, under other circumstances, he had so extensively been conversant. I adduce the testimony of Dr. Furman, as that which is, on every account, eminently entitled, on this subject, to carry with it authority.

The views in which the Committee of the Convention presented the important matter referred to them by the Convention, might be more extensively spread before you; but enough, I persuade myself, has been, even in this cursory exhibition of its claims, adduced, to justify me without detaining you from it longer, in proceeding to that, in which the interest of the subject will be seen to be concentrated, viz: the inquiry in what manner the religious instruction of our slaves should be conducted, in order that we may feel that our Christian duty with respect to them is fulfilled, and the happiness and comfort at once of themselves, and of the community, secured.

The report of the Committee, exhibited this part of the subject in considerable variety and extent. I cannot but earnestly commend the greater part of what they have said, to the serious attention of all.

“In recommending the *means* to be employed for effecting the proposed end, and which, under existing circumstances, may be considered the best calculated to do so, your Committee would first consider the persons most proper to be engaged in the work. These are:

“1. The Clergy with their assistants in Sunday Schools.

“2. Lay Catechists usefully employed in the primitive ages of the Church, and now rendered absolutely necessary in our Church by the small number of Clergy.

“3. The proprietors of slaves, or their agents or overseers, with the assistance of their families.

“1. To the Clergy particularly does it pertain to watch for souls—to warn *every* man of the danger of living without Christ in the world, to proclaim to all within the reach of his instruction, the glad tidings of salvation through a crucified and risen Redeemer, to guide and direct immortal souls in the path of duty, to spend and be spent in the service of their Lord. To the poor especially, they are sent, and the slave has peculiar claims on their labours and their prayers. The master may search the Scriptures for himself, and unaided by man, may find out the way of salvation. The

slave, by the circumstances of his condition, and his ignorance, must depend upon the instruction of others. The responsibility of a Minister of Christ, in relation to our slave population, is deep and solemn, and if properly discharged, arduous in the extreme. In our low Country Parishes, it is impossible for one individual to perform all that his heart, and his judgment may direct, as necessary for the spiritual well being of the souls committed to his charge. But because he cannot do all that he would, shall he lie idle on his oars and do nothing? God forbid! he can do much, very much for this portion of his flock.

“The first *method* which we would suggest to him, is the establishment of Sunday Schools, in which, aided by the pious of his flock, he may inculcate the plain and simple truths and precepts of the Gospel. If the owners be duly impressed with the importance of the religious instruction of their slaves, he will find no difficulty in collecting a large number. The School should be assembled before the morning service, or after it, and opened, and concluded with a form of prayer taken from the prayer book, or such form as may be prepared, or approved by the Bishop. For the children of the School, we would recommend the use of ‘Catechism No. 2,’ of the Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union, (the Church Catechism, broken into short questions and answers) and also such Catechism as may be prepared, or be caused, as herein after proposed, to be prepared, by the Bishop: the ‘Scripture Cards,’ or portions of Scripture, illustrated by large Engravings, that both the eye and the ear may be engaged: ‘Watts’ Divine and Moral Songs, with his summary of the Ten Commandments, and our Saviour’s Golden rule,’ and ‘Short Prayers for morning and evening, adapted to the use of children,’ (published by the Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union.) The instruction of course to be altogether oral.”

“For the adults we would recommend, besides the Church Catechism, that the teachers read a certain portion of Scrip-

ture, (selected by the Minister,) and after giving a brief and simple explanation of each verse, ask some plain questions on what has been read, repeating them until the whole class are able to answer them correctly. And that the teacher may be enabled to explain properly such portions of Scripture, the Minister should meet them on some day in the week, and furnish them by a lecture or otherwise, such directions as may be necessary to aid them in their work. We would also recommend that the Minister, once a month, at the opening of the School in a brief address, suited to the capacities of the scholars, dwell on some of the plain, but necessary doctrines of the Gospel. After the regular services of the white and coloured congregation united, perhaps it may be well to assemble the slaves by themselves, and after singing a hymn, giving it out line by line, address them in a brief exhortation, concluding with prayer. A class should be formed of the candidates for Baptism, and the Lord's Supper to be instructed by the Minister himself. With respect to the Baptism of infants that must be left to the discretion of the Minister concerned. By visiting them in sickness and distress, he will manifest his interest in their welfare, and be enabled, under God, to influence them for good. Above all, if he would be blessed in his labours, he should be much in prayer for them. So far, our remarks will apply equally to the Clergy of the city and the country. To the country Clergyman, another field of usefulness is opened, which has been, and must continue to be blessed, if properly and prayerfully occupied. Let him set apart certain days in each week, for visiting, with the consent of the proprietors, the plantations in his neighbourhood, assembling the slaves for worship and instruction, and if time permits, Catechising the younger among them. He should not take charge of a larger number of plantations than he can conveniently visit once a fortnight. We are aware, that in recommending this plan, we are making out a work of no small magnitude. But we do so in the supposition that the Clergy are willing to *labour* in their high and holy calling;

and that they are ready to *spend, and be spent* in the work of winning souls to Christ. We believe that with ordinary health and talents, they may carry our proposed plans into effect."

"2. But let the Clergy exert themselves to the utmost of their strength and ability, yet, if they be unaided, but little will be effected, compared with what must remain undone. The greatest number of plantations which a Clergyman having charge of a Congregation could conveniently attend, are seven or eight. Considering each plantation to average fifty slaves capable of receiving instruction, he would be enabled to instruct not more than three hundred and fifty, or four hundred. How small a proportion do these form to the actual number in many of our Country Parishes. In one of them,* the statistics of which are before us, there are upwards of six thousand slaves, between the ages of 10 and 100 years. On some plantations which one of your Committee visited, he has found slaves of 70 or 80 years of age, who had never had proclaimed to them the glad tidings of salvation—who had never heard the preached word.

"To remedy this deficiency of instruction, we would recommend, did the wants of our Church permit it, the employment of Clergyman of our Church, as Missionaries, particularly to this class of our community; as is the case on the plantations of the Messrs. Clarkson, on the Wateree, where one of our Clergy is, we trust, as usefully as he is honorably employed. But years must elapse, we fear, before this desirable end can be accomplished. We cannot, however, but indulge the hope, that the time is not far distant, when the circumstances of the Church will permit it, and when the Lord will put it into the hearts of many of our younger Clergy, to devote themselves to this interesting work. Until that period shall arrive, we would recommend

* St. Luke's Parish.

to the planters of our Church, the employment of Lay Catechists. These Catechists might be chosen from among the candidates for orders, or where these could not be obtained, from among some pious, but needy members of our Church. In the West-Indies, the labours of the Catechists have been blessed, and we doubt not, that under proper regulations, they would prove important auxiliaries to the Clergy in this work. The Catechists should visit the plantations which they might be engaged to attend, at appointed days and fixed hours. They should not take charge of a larger number of plantations, than would allow them to visit each, at least once a week.* We would recommend the same course of instruction to be pursued by them, under the direction of the Minister of the Parish, as recommended for the Sunday School teachers. Should Catechists be employed in the immediate vicinity of the Minister of the Parish, so as to free him from the duty of taking charge of any number of plantations, he should visit each of those under their care at least once in three months. The Catechist should report to the Minister of the Parish, and if the Parish be vacant, to the Bishop." I will but add, he should in every instance be approved and licensed by the ecclesiastical authority.

"3. We have spoken of the duty and plans to be adopted by the Clergy and Lay Catechists—a still more important link in the chain of the religious instruction of our slaves, is to be considered,—the plan to be pursued by the proprietors themselves, and their families—should they refuse their co-operation and aid, the labours of the Clergy and Catechists will be comparatively of little avail; at least, much less good will be effected than if they united in the work."

"The experience of ages proves, that he who labours for the spiritual improvement of his household, is not left 'without witness'—never labours altogether in vain. If in some instances, he fail, he has still, 'that which the world can

* In the West-Indies, they are required to visit each plantation three times a week,

neither give, nor take away,' the consciousness of having done his duty. In considering the plan of instruction which your Committee may suggest, let each master of slaves ask himself before God, is not this my duty? And then let him pursue it, convinced, that however great his discouragements may be at first, by the blessing of God, great good must ultimately result. In the course to be recommended, he must, to carry it into full effect, be aided by his family; or should he be so situated, as to be compelled to reside at a distance from his slaves, by care in the choice of his agents and overseers, and by particular directions to them, his own active engagement in the work may be supplied."

The pious advice of the Committee, which in this part of their report was given, that the slaves of every plantation should be assembled twice every day for family worship, is not here inserted, because it has seemed to propose more than would be generally practicable, or than proprietors could be induced to approve. It cannot be doubted, that so far as it may be practicable, and proprietors may see it to be good for them to adopt it, the institution of such daily worship would have a beneficial influence—and greatly contribute to the promotion of sound and happy religion among the slaves. Where the numbers are small, and the lands over which they are dispersed for labour, are not too extensive, it is presumable that Christian masters will cheerfully, and fondly, adopt the practice of such a daily assembling of their slaves—but as a general rule, it is scarcely to be expected, that it will receive the attention, which it is wished that the suggestions of the Committee should command. This final part of the report, closes with the following :

"In conclusion, your Committee remark that they offer this plan, merely as embodying *suggestions*, believing that pious masters, Catechists, and the Ministers having charge of the coloured people, on reflection, and after experience, will be best qualified to decide whether to adopt them, or to mark out a plan for themselves. They commend their

report to the blessing of God, without which, all our efforts will be in vain.”

I have thus put before you, brethren, the sense of the *Convention of our Churches*, on the subject of the religious instruction of our slaves—the Convention having by the disposal they made of the report of their Committee, made its contents to be the counsel which they thought good for all of our communion.

Permit me to add to what the Committee so justly said of the claims with which this subject so peculiarly addresses itself to the Protestant Episcopalians of South-Carolina, that for us, on another ground, the obligation exists, of deferring no longer to give our utmost attention to the religious instruction of the slave population, subject to our care and authority. In some form or other, religion will make its way among them. We cannot prevent by any vigilance which we can use, their being taught that which we should not desire, or think it good that they should learn, nor can we prevent the prevalence among them of the perversion and delusion, that will make of them ready subjects of the worst influences of fanaticism, unless we pre-occupy and guard their minds, by means of such religious instruction as we believe to be, on all accounts, and in all respects, “good and profitable” for them. I would not here be mistaken. Of such Methodist Ministers, as I have known to be employed among the plantations of the members of our Church, I have no reason to speak, but with respect, as faithful and judicious men, whose services promise only that which is good. Still, I cannot but express my decided conviction, that it is better for us, so far as it may be possibly practicable, to confide this business to none, but those who will conduct it, according to what we know to be the sober, scriptural, practical, and at once simple and deeply impressive system of our own Church’s doctrine and worship. From the training of these people, as subjects of religious instruction, according to its formularies, great advantage has been seen to

come. Unwearied patience, in this humble labour of love, would, I have good reason to believe, be blessed with results, certainly happy for its subjects, and greatly beneficial to the community.

Having, brethren, as I have said, conveyed to you the views of the Convention as embodied in the report of their Committee, approved and adopted by them, I must bring this communication to a close; resisting the inclination which the interest of the subject, in general, induces, to enlarge on some points connected with it, not unfit to engage the Pastoral counsel, with which, I have, specially, been asked to address you. The subject of *our slaves*, is one which circumstances have made of so much delicacy; it is in consequence of an ill-informed, unwise, and even a reckless philanthropy, affecting it, in other parts of our union, surrounded with so much sensibility of alarm and offence, and where, the moral interest of it is concerned, is, under the supposition of even the best dispositions entertained among us to promote it, encumbered, confessedly, with so much difficulty, that the Ministers of religion cannot approach it, with too great caution and circumspection. They may, by their conduct, in relation to it, do much evil, where they contemplate only to do good. Yet they cannot be induced by any consideration, to forego the desire, natural and proper to their office, to carry among this class of their fellow men, the *glad tidings of the salvation*, with which alike for the rich and poor, the high and low, they are charged. Nor can they less desire, as members of a community, to whose fortunes whether for good or evil, this inheritance has, in the course of Providence, been given inseparably to belong, to contribute what they can, to the promotion of what it may have in it, for the common good, and the qualifying and reducing of the evil, which the possession would seem most naturally to involve. As one of their number, I am ready to declare my full conviction, that neither the good of the community, so far as it may consist with the per-

petuation, which I cannot see to be avoidable, of this peculiarity of our civil and social condition, can be secured, nor the evil which is obviously inseparable from it, be mitigated, without care extended on Christian principles, to the moral interest and character of these people. In this, indeed, I am ready to confess, that I see, in relation to them, the sum at once of our duty and our interest. There are schemes respecting them, now, and for some years past, on foot, among the pious, and on every account respectable, of our fellow citizens, in which I own myself unable to see it to be the duty or wisdom of the Christian to bear the part, which is so loudly urged on him, as, in a peculiar manner his. Both the duty and the wisdom of the Christian seem to me, in a manner greatly paramount, to consist, in giving them in the condition in which they are, the knowledge of God, according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and cheerfully committing the event of this course, *prudently, intelligently, observingly and conscientiously* pursued, to the disposal of an allwise and benignant Providence. In other schemes referred to, with the exception of their operation in the case of native Africans, recently captured from those abandoned adventurers, who, in spite of the concurrence of Christian nations for its suppression, still pursue their profligate, barbarous, detestable slave coast traffic, I can see no other than a very questionable humanity, if not a policy which would make humanity a sacrifice to its claims. Whether it be a sound or a morbid sensibility, that gives rise to projects which would discharge our slaves from those circumstances of gradual amelioration, which characterize their condition as the servants of Christian people, I cannot but prefer to all such projects, a firm acquiescence in the necessity, to which, as a community, we are subjected, accompanied with a practical and active anxiety to know, and to the utmost, fulfil, what is with respect to it, the duty of the Christian, as the Scriptures teach it. At least, until we can feel the call to be imperative on us, to discharge them, unfitted for the

privileges and advantages of freedom, into that wretched freedom, where the crime and want, and universal degradation and misery which make the condition of the natural man, would bitterly reproach our philanthropy, and make only compunction its reward, let us be content to make of them, to the utmost that we can, disciples of that Saviour, whose religion, has precepts as well for bond as free; learning at his mouth, to be humble, contented, quiet, peaceable, faithful, upright and pure, that they too, *may be heirs, according to the promise, of eternal life.* The trouble and unhappiness of slave-proprietorship, are undoubtedly not magnified, in the complaint of them, which it is, so common to hear. There is but one way of comfortably modifying the pain and vexation of this lot of life. Experience has amply shewn it to be a comparatively easy lot to him, who, with a thoughtful, prudent, pious, yet vigilant and firm humanity, has administered the necessary government and control of his plantations. With respect to any discomfort that may unavoidably pertain to our peculiar circumstances of temporal inheritance, or any questions respecting them, that may arise or be suggested, to perplex and trouble us, we may find, I believe, in this, a satisfactory mode of obviating either. In short, let us do what else we will, we cannot fulfil the claims which are upon us, in the peculiar situation, which has by inheritance been assigned us, unless we faithfully endeavour to discharge, so far as it may be practicable, with respect to those of our fellow beings, in whose behalf, it has been made my duty to address you, that which is *our conscious Christian duty.*

It may consist with the design and expectation of the Convention, in requiring of me a communication of this nature, that I should not omit from it, the specific recommendation of such expedients, as might seem to myself, officially, to be practicable and proper. I have none to commend but such as the Committee pointed out, in the parts of their report which I have given. It has long been my earnest

desire that the Clergy of our several Parishes could extend their pastoral care to the slaves of the members of their congregations. It has at the same time been obvious, that unless they had otherwise very little duty attaching to their situations, it would be in their power to do very little in this way. In a few instances, peculiar and uncommon vigour and energy of body and spirit, might make the combination practicable, to a considerable extent, of both kinds of duty. Generally, however, it could not be expected. In all cases in which it might be done, it was suggested, that proprietors should, if possible, be induced to unite in a subscription to defray the expense of the additional labour to which their Ministers might be subjected, in visiting, in some stated and systematic manner, as many plantations as time and circumstances would permit. For several years past, however, the wish has been entertained, and often in the course of those years, expressed, that Ministers of our Church, might be employed, who in aid of, and in concurrence with the Rectors of the Parishes, might be charged with this species of duty, under such regulations, as might, to such Rectors seem suitable and necessary, and to proprietors, of their congregations—who should combine to provide for the support of such Ministers, as Chaplains of their estates. It cannot too much be regretted that the number of our Clergy, inadequate to services ordinarily requiring them, could admit of none to spare for this extraordinary requisition. The hope is not, however, relinquished, that some will be found willing and qualified to be so employed, and that where they may be, proprietors will be found ready to provide the means of their support and comfort in the discharge of this humble and charitable, yet most important service.

Where Clergymen cannot be had, and until they can be, the desire has been expressed, and is still entertained, that the Minister of the Parish, might be authorized by his parishioners to select a Catechist, to whom he might commit

the instruction of their slaves, under his direction and supervision, on his being licensed by the ecclesiastical authority. In all cases, whether as to Clergymen employed, or Lay Catechists, it is deemed indispensably necessary that the most rigid and scrupulous conformity be observed to the order and discipline, which proprietors may deem best for their plantations. With these, no interference whatever should be allowed. Nor should the proprietor be required, or expected to let the services of a Minister or Catechist be continued on his plantation, longer than while he should be satisfied with their character and effect.

To the Clergy, I can have but little to say, in addition to what has been repeatedly expressed to them individually and collectively, as my sense of their duty, touching this highly interesting matter. They will recollect that for many years, it has been urged that they should consider the slaves of their parishioners as included in their pastoral charge—and having a claim, to as great an extent as circumstances might make reasonable, on their attention. They will indulge me in the repetition on this occasion, of my solicitude on the subject. As far as possible, I would entreat them to take the case of these people to heart—and and labour for their spiritual happiness to the utmost that their strength and opportunity will permit. They are of the household of those to whom they minister, and of course subject to their pastoral care—except so far as they may have become, by difference of persuasion, subject to the same care on the part of others. The Clergy may not, in many instances, have time or strength to spare to them; but they may exert an influence in their behalf, which may be of great importance. They may find those to whose attention they may safely and satisfactorily be committed—and may exercise a wholesome and encouraging superintendence of the conduct of their religious instruction. They may at least cause themselves to be recognised as their spiritual pastors, having a care for their souls, and willing, and desir-

ous to promote their good. They may in a manner perfectly consistent with their province, influence, without offence, the minds of proprietors, in behalf of the claims of humanity in this important particular—and even where necessity might require, by their counsel and persuasion, occasion such modifications of sentiment in reference to it, as would induce civil measures to be modified in conformity with the demands of evangelical benevolence, towards these people, as its objects. I need not, however, point out to my brethren of the Ministry, the particulars in which they might exercise in this respect, the office of watchful, and and considerate spiritual pastors. They will see them readily enough, for themselves, and while they lament in how few particulars they can execute such an office as they would, in all that they can, they will not fail to manifest for these people the concern which becomes them, as the agents of his grace and compassion, who came to preach *the Gospel to the poor, and make all the people of the earth rejoice in his salvation.*

I have now to solicit your indulgent reception of what I have written, and subscribe myself,

Your friend and brother in the Lord,

NATHANIEL BOWEN.

P. S.—The Catechism, which by the resolution of the Convention it is made the business of the Bishop to “prepare, or cause to be prepared,” is not ready for publication. The earliest opportunity of which my numerous engagements would admit, has been taken, to execute the wish of the Convention, as to the views they have thought it fit and obligatory for them to adopt, in relation to the religious instruction of our slaves. The table of Scripture lessons required, is appended to this communication. The Catechism will make a separate publication—and a larger impression of it, than was necessary of this, be issued, as soon as circumstances will permit.

SELECTIONS FROM SCRIPTURE,
 FOR THE
 INSTRUCTION OF THE COLOURED PERSONS,
 IN CONNEXION
 WITH THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH
 IN THE
 DIOCESE OF SOUTH-CAROLINA:

N. B.—It is not meant to define *how much* of each portion should be used for each lesson; nor *in what order* the lessons should succeed each other: but merely to select such portions of Scripture as may be useful, either in part, or as a whole.

GENESIS 1 Chap. 2 “ 3 “ 4 to v. 16 (in- clusive.*) 6 Chap. 7 “ 8 “ 9 to v. 17th. 11 Chap. to v. 9. 12 “ to v. 9. 13 “ 15 “ to v. 18. 17 “ 18 from v. 17 to end. 19 Chap. from v. 1 to 3, and from v. 12 to 29 21 Chap. to v. 20. 22 “ to v. 19. 24 “ 27 “		GENESIS 28 Chap. 29 “ to v. 14. 32 “ to v. 22. 33 “ 37 “ 39 to v. 6, and from v. 20 to end. 40 “ 41 “ 42 “ 43 “ 44 “ 45 “ 46 to v. 7, and from v. 28 to end. EXODUS 1 Chap. from v. 6 to 14 and v. 22. 2 Chap. v. 1 to 10, and 23d to end.
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* The other references throughout the table, are also meant to be *inclusive*.

EXODUS	3 Chap.	I KINGS	8 Chap.
	4 " to v. 23		9 "
	8 "		17 "
	9 "		18 "
	10 "		19 "
	11 "	II KINGS	2 "
	12 "		4 "
	14 "		5 "
	16 "		24 "
	17 " to v. 7.		25 "
	19 "	EZRA	1 "
	20 " to v. 23	NEHEM.	2 "
	32 "		13 v. 15 to 22.
	33 " to v. 17	JOB	1 Chap.
NUMBERS	13 Chap. to v. 3, and 17 to end.		2 "
	14 Chap.		5 "
	16 "		7 "
	21 v. 4 to v. 9.		9 "
DEUTER.	4 Chap. to v. 40.		14 "
	6 "		42 "
	8 "	PSALMS	—Selections from these to be made at the discretion of the Teacher.
	9 "		
	10 v. 12 to end.	PROV.	1 Chap.
	18 Chap. v. 9 to v. 20.		2 "
	30 "		3 "
	34 "		4 "
JOSHUA	3 Chap.		6 v. 6 to 11, and 16 to 19.
	6 "		11 Chap.
	7 "		12 and many de- tached pas- sages, of which the selection must be left to individual judgment.
	23 "	ISAIAH	1 Chap. v. 1 to 6, and 16 to v. 20.
	24 "		
JUDGES	2 Chap.		11 Chap.
I SAMUEL	3 "		35 "
	4 to v. 18.		40 "
	6 Chap.		
	7 from v. 1 to 6.		
	12 Chap.		
	16 to v. 13.		
	17 Chap.		
II SAMU'L	15 " to v. 15.		
	18 "		
I KINGS	5 "		
	6 "		

ISAIAH 42 Chap. from v.	ISAIAH 65 Chap.
1 to v. 12.	LAMENTATIONS 3 Chap.
43 Chap. v. 1	to v. 41.
to 13.	EZEKIEL 18 Chap.
44 “	33 Chap. from v.
52 “ from v.	1 to 20.
7 and	37 Chap. v. 1.
53 “	to 14.
54 “	DANIEL 3 Chap.
55 “	5 “
58 “	6 “
60 to v. 14.	JONAH—The whole.
61 Chap. to v. 3.	MALACHI 3 Chap.
63 “	4 “

From the Gospels and Acts, it is of little use to select, for almost every verse may be suitable at one time or another: but the parables in general, and the narratives of our Saviour's sufferings, death and resurrection, (particularly as given by St. John) may be deemed important—as also the following passages:

MATT. 5 Chap.	ROMANS 7 Chap.
6 “	8 v. 1 to 18, and
7 “	31st to end.
25 from v. 31 to	12 Chap.
end.	13 “
LUKE 13 Chap.	I CORIN. 1 v. 18 to end.
15 “	11 Chap. v. 20
JOHN 3 “	to end.
ACTS 2 Chap.	13 Chap.
3 “	15 “
5 “	II CORIN. 3 “
8 “	4 “
9 “	GALAT. 5 v. 14 to end.
10 “	EPHES. 5 Chap.
16 v. 23 to 34.	6 v. 1 to 20.
17 Chap. v. 16	PHILIPP. 2 Chap. v. 1 to
to end.	16.
24 “	3 v. 3 to end.
25 “	4 Chap. v. 4 to
27 “	13.
28 “	COLOS. 3 Chap.
ROMANS 1 v. 18 to end.	I THESS. 4 v. 13 to end.
2 Chap. v. 1 to	5 Chap. v. 1 to
12, and v. 16.	25.
6 Chap.	

TITUS	2 Chap.	I PETER	1 Chap. v. 13
HEB.	1 " and		to end.
	2 to v. 4.		3 Chap. v. 1 to
	4 Chap. from v.		18.
	9 to end.	II PETER	3 Chap. v. 8 to
	10 Chap. from v.		14
	24 to end.	I JOHN	1 "
	11 Chap.		2 v. 1 to 11.
	12 "		3 Chap.
	13 v. 1 to 8.		4 v. 7 to end.
JAMES	1 Chap.	REVEL.	7 Chap. v. 9 to
	2 from v. 8 to		end.
	end.		20 " v. 11 to
	3 Chap. 2d to		end.
	end.		21 v. 1 to 8.
	4 "		22 Chap.
	5 v. 7 to end.		

Passages relating especially to Servants.

MATT.	18 Chap. v. 23	EPHES.	6 v. 5 to 8.
	to end.	COL.	3 Chap. v. 22
	24 v. 45 to end.		to 25.
	25 Chap. v. 14	I TIM.	6 Chap. vs. 1
	to 30		and 2.
LUKE	12 v. 42 to 48.	TITUS	2 Chap. 9 and
I COR.	7 Chap. v. 20		10
	to 22	I PETER	2 v. 18 to end.





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